



OFFICE OF THE CLERK/TREASURER

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BOARD OF FINANCE

NOVEMBER 7, 2011

MINUTES

PRESENT: Mayor Kiss, City Council President Keogh, Councilors Wright, Paul, and Mulvaney-Stanak, Interim CAO Schrader

ALSO PRESENT: Councilors Hartnett, Blais, Decelles, and Bushor; ACAO Goodwin; Erin Demers, Carol Weston, Pat Buteau, DPW; Larry Kupferman, Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro, CEDO; Barbara Grimes, BED; Assistant City Attorney Bergman; Mari Steinbach, Parks and Recreation; Joel Banner Baird, Burlington Free Press.

1. Agenda

Councilor Wright requested to remove item #7: Audit Resolution.

On a motion by Councilor Wright and City Council President Keogh, the agenda was adopted unanimously as amended.

2. Approval of the Board of Finance Minutes

a. August 1, 2011

A member of the audience suggested a clarification be made to the minutes regarding position reclassifications.

City Council President Keogh and Councilor Wright made a motion to approve the minutes as amended. The motion passed unanimously.

3. DPW: Resident Engineer Contract Amendment

The Board considered a request from Public Works to amend the Resident Engineer contract. Erin Demers, DPW, stated approval would allow a resident engineer to be on site for the Pearl Street project. This would provide an additional \$10,000 for the project that took place throughout September and October. The engineer would help correct drainage issues after paving was complete. The project was about 97% complete and this would finalize it.

City Council President Keogh and Councilor Wright made a motion to approve the amendment. The motion passed unanimously.

4. DPW: Capital Equipment Purchases

Pat Buteau, DPW, spoke to the Board, explaining there were two pieces of equipment that DPW

would like to purchase in 2012: an aerial bucket truck for traffic signals and a new service truck cab and chassis for the mechanic shop.

Mayor Kiss inquired about the use of natural gas in vehicles. Mr. Buteau stated it had been difficult to justify the cost in smaller vehicles. The price may come down in the future as the technology advances.

City Council President Keogh inquired which vehicles ran on CNG. Pat Buteau stated there were currently six trucks running on it and they have ordered two more recycling trucks that will utilize it. City Council President Keogh inquired about the specifications of the RFPs. Pat Buteau stated anyone could bid on it, but there were only three companies that make bucket trucks.

Mayor Kiss inquired about the hydrogen fueling station. Pat Buteau stated it had been sold and NASA was going to invest in it to rehab the station to allow a hydrogen fueled bus to run at their museum. The pad was left in place in case it can be used in the future.

City Council President Keogh and Councilor Mulvaney-Stanak made a motion to approve the purchase. The motion passed unanimously.

5. DPW: Memorial Auditorium Ramp Replacement

The Board considered a request from Public Works for improvements to Memorial Auditorium. Carol Weston of DPW stated these repairs were already listed in the Capital Improvements Budget. She explained there would be three projects bid together. The first project would replace the ramp on Union Street, a top priority for accessibility. The second project would repair the north stairs and a wall on the library parking lot side. The third project would rehab the retaining wall along the driveway and fix the handrails, bringing it up to code. There was \$250,000 in this year's budget to complete this project. The total cost will be \$288,000. Bidding them together would save money, so funds for flood repairs will be used to cover the \$28,500 difference. There were two bidders, the lowest was Wright and Morrissey. The funds can be moved back in if needed. She also explained there was another project in the works for Memorial Auditorium for interior duct work that will come in the future. This request is to transfer the funds and authorize signing the contract.

Councilor Wright inquired if all of these were safety issues. Carol Weston stated they are all safety or code issues. The biggest safety issue is the unstable concrete on the top of the building. A mason removed the loose pieces to help stabilize it. The ramp and stairs are code and safety violations. The wall and the stairs will become bigger problems if they are not fixed now.

Councilor Wright stated the Council passed a resolution requesting a study of Memorial and inquired if the repairs should wait until the results were available. Carol Weston stated the ramp definitely needed to be fixed because it would be necessary to close the accessible entrance. The interior work may be able to wait but the entrances have to be kept up.

Mayor Kiss stated the study was pending the approval of the downtown TIF uses. He stated investments should be examined carefully but code and safety are important. Carol Weston stated these are the entrances that need the most work. There were other improvements that would be needed in the future but they could wait for the results of the study.

Councilor Mulvaney-Stanak inquired about flood money being used for the project. Carol Weston stated what is needed for flood damage depends on FEMA and how much money the City will need to provide. FEMA will likely pay for repairs and construction was unlikely to begin until next spring. Some flood repairs could be appropriately paid for out of other funds.

City Council President Keogh and Councilor Mulvaney-Stanak made a motion to approve the project. The motion passed unanimously.

6. HR: BED Reclassification of Customer and Energy Services Position

Barbara Grimes, General Manager of BED, addressed the Board regarding her request for the reclassification of a position in her department. She stated there were new duties associated with the position, such as negotiating repayment agreements. This position would take on more customer service roles and with advance metering there was additional work to do. This was anticipated in the budget and did not change the organizational structure.

City Council President Keogh and Councilor Mulvaney-Stanak made a motion to approve the reclassification. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Penny for Parks (Discussion Only)

A member of the audience stated there was confusion regarding the definition of existing parks and the eligibility for funding. The existing Skate Park was a stand-alone facility and was not part of Waterfront Park. Building a new Skate Park in a new location made it a new project and, therefore, ineligible for Penny for Parks funding. It was added into the Parks and Recreation budget without approval from the Parks and Recreation Commission. He stated he objected to using the money in this way. Maintaining a new Skate Park would also impact the future of Penny for Parks. There were several projects that needed to be reexamined. He inquired if the General Fund money was still being allocated to Park maintenance, because Penny for Parks was never meant to be a stand-alone funding source. Mari Steinbach, Director of Parks and Recreation, stated she did not have the dollar amount available. Some capital improvement money was used for maintenance of Memorial Auditorium bleachers and Leddy Arena.

Councilor Hartnett, a member of the audience, stated people want a Skate Park, but it should not be funded through Penny for Parks. Park impact fees would be a good funding source and inquired where they are used. Interim CAO Schrader stated they were considered general revenue from the General Fund. Councilor Hartnett stated Penny for Parks should be used for maintenance after a Skate Park is built. There currently was no process for spending the money. There were other projects that may be lower priority, such as resurfacing tennis courts at Appletree Point. The courts at Roosevelt Park were also in bad shape and were more heavily used. Councilor Hartnett believed that using funds on a skate park would be mismanagement and there should be a better process to determine how these funds were spent.

Mayor Kiss stated there would be further discussions, however the budget had already been approved. Mari Steinbach stated there had not been enough engagement. In the long term, there needed to be a clarified inventory and assessment of the Parks, something the Department was working on. Appletree Point was reviewed by the Parks and Recreation Commission in the past. This year was the first time there was a budget presented, but it was done hastily. The next step would be to have an outline for the process, a review period, and an opportunity for the

community to give input. Mayor Kiss stated Penny for Parks could be used for repair, replacement, and expansion of existing parks. Mari Steinbach stated projects can move up or down based on priority. The new Skate Park would require less maintenance than the existing one. Funding for a new Skate Park should include portions dedicated to maintenance. Park impact fees are used for development projects, most recently for Waterfront development at the bottom of College Street.

Councilor Wright stated he appreciated the five year plan and believed it was important to use the funds in the way voters approved them. He inquired if Moran were to be delayed or stopped, would the Skate Park still be built. Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro, CEDO, stated as part of the Waterfront North project, the bike path would be realigned and go through the existing Skate Park, which is in disrepair. There were several other projects included in the Waterfront North project.

Councilor Wright stated there were questions as to whether or not to go forward with Moran. Larry Kupferman, Director of CEDO, stated the Waterfront North funding dedicated to the bike path and sidewalks cannot be used for the Skate Park because it is federal highway money. The plan is for Moran to go forward.

Councilor Bushor, a member of the audience, inquired about dedicated taxes and how each was decided by the community to be used for a specific purpose. Other income sources were rolled into a budgetary process and adopted after coming through a process. Penny for Parks had been controversial and some thought it could be done in a better manner, however, that was what the public wanted. It was meant to be a fund that was enhanced by General Fund money to maintain and build new parks. She stated she supported creating a process. She stated there should be options for every age group and there was a need to replace the current Skate Park. The fact that people do not understand how Penny for Parks money was being spent was the issue.

A member of the audience stated he voted for Penny for Parks but was dissatisfied. He appreciated that there would be a process developed but was not in favor of using the funds for new facilities. There were many parks in poor shape that should be the priority.

A member of the audience stated she had had a problem with her car being blocked due to the triathlon and was unable to return to her home from 8 am to 3 pm. She stated she received no notification that this would happen. Mari Steinbach stated there were problems and many parties were working together. A lot was learned and traffic management with notifications would be priorities for next year.

A member of the audience stated the high school softball teams don't have a field to practice or play on. An \$800,000 skate park would be nice, but maintenance comes before capital investment and improvement projects.

Councilor Paul stated there was no process in place for Penny for Parks. There were many tennis courts in bad repair and the lack of softball field is an issue. The field at Leddy Park would need to be redone. The South End was fortunate to have a high quality donated baseball field and every area in the City should have that. This needed to be reopened and done correctly so the most important issues were being dealt with. She believed this money could be used more intelligently.

Councilor Paul stated that at two Parks, Arts and Culture Committee meetings in 2010, she had been told that \$200,000 for the Skate Park would be raised privately and the remainder would come from state or private grants. Now, it appeared that \$150,000 of City money would be used. The budget should be reopened and reexamined with public participation. The public was now upset because that money was not used in the way it was intended to be.

Mari Steinbach stated the resolution and flood response resolution contained items that were previously looked at by the Parks and Recreation Commission. Other projects were moved to other years to help with flood response. There was a public process. The Appletree Point tennis courts have been in disrepair and on the to-do list since the first year that Penny for Parks was created. Further assessment was needed to make decisions. No one requested the Leddy Park ball fields be added to the list until recently and they will be in the upcoming year. The Schools may be able to help make improvements to the field. Ms. Steinbach noted that revisiting the entire list of projects this year would not make sense. Mari Steinbach stated that money should be used for Parks, not building maintenance and City Engineers have helped with that. The Skate Park would be a grand improvement to the Waterfront Park, the crowned jewel of the Parks system.

Councilor Decelles, a member of the audience, stated that revisiting the issue makes sense. Many people dislike the cost of the project, not the project itself. There were problems with drainage on the baseball field that need to be fixed. Mari Steinbach stated the entire waterfront project was \$1.4 million and involved relocation of the bike path. That alone could cost \$300,000. The City would have to put forward 20%, or \$60,000. Putting money forward for an improved skate park provided not only a better skate park, but a realigned park, better green space and better drive-ability.

Councilor Wright stated it should be funded a different way so that Penny for Parks money can go back into maintenance. It is important to ensure the public has confidence in the process.

Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro stated the skate park was originally part of Moran and the contribution from Parks had been decreased substantially. Penny for Parks was intended for both replacement and repair of facilities. There have been a variety of estimates for the project and the cost proposed fell in the appropriate range. The TIGER Grant money and Transportation Grant money are contingent upon replacement of the Skate Park at the same time as the other improvements. Delaying it two to three years was not an option because a substantial amount of federal grant funding would be lost. ACAO Goodwin inquired of the total dollar amount of the grants. Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro stated the TIGER Grants were worth \$3,150,000. There was \$2 million from other funding sources. There have been many outside resources used to make these improvements to the community.

Councilor Paul stated the minutes from a previous meeting state that Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro had stated that no City money would be used for the Skate Park and funds would be raised through private, state and federal funding. Kirsten Merriman-Shapiro stated she was happy to go back to review the presentation. She stated she had always been clear that there would be a mix of funding. There was a lot of information given and sometimes details were missed in the minutes.

A member of the audience stated there are other projects that need the funding other than the Skate Park.

Mayor Kiss stated the conversation would be ongoing and this would not be the end of it.

On a motion by City Council President Keogh and Councilor Wright, the meeting was adjourned at 6:30 p.m.